Five Experiments in the Portrayal of Intoxication on the Stage

by Gene Courtney

1950

Submitted to the Department of Speech and Drama and the Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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For the department

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The portrayal of intoxication is one of the most widely used yet rarely discussed aspects of the art of acting. Actors have been portraying intoxication on the stage since the days of the early Grecian Dionysian festivals. The theatre's first comedians were the drunken members of the audience at the Dionysian festivals who burlesqued the tragic rituals which had been performed earlier in the day. Throughout the history of the theatre, inebriated characters have been the ever popular, faithful workhorses of comedy. In the modern theatre, with the advent of realism, the introduction of modern psychology, and the change of public opinion concerning alcohol, the actor has been called upon to portray the serious, as well as the comic, aspects of intoxication. In fact, the modern play which does not require at least one actor to take a drink during the action is unusual.

Despite the frequent portrayals of intoxicated characters in the theatre, rarely, if ever, is the subject even mentioned in the discourses which have been written about character portrayal. The few actors who have specialized in the portrayal of intoxicated characters have not seen fit to write any sort of treatise on the subject. Since

there is little available information about the portrayal of intoxication, each individual actor is forced to develop this phase of his characterization through experience alone.

The novice actor must approach the development and interpretation of an intoxicated character without the benefit of any guidance except his own observations and the advice of the director. In many cases, the director can only tell the actor that he seems to be "too drunk" or "not drunk enough." Under the circumstances, the novice actor has to rely upon the stereotyped concepts of how a "drunk" behaves. (Throughout this thesis, the now accepted expression "a drunk," which was until recently both ungrammatical and a vulgarism, will be used.) Unfortunately, for the novice actor, there is no such thing as "a drunk." There are people who have been drinking. There are others who have overindulged. There are some who are chronic or habitual drinkers. There is not "a drunk." It is fallacious and naive to assume that everyone reacts to alcohol in the same way. There are many different degrees and types of intoxication. Each individual has a personal motivation for drinking and each does so in a slightly different environment and situation.

This does not discount the fact that alcohol does have certain recognisable effects upon the human body. The danger lies in the assumption that these effects manifest themselves identically in all cases. Caricatures, instead

of characterizations, result from such reasoning.

Thus, the only course left open to the novice actor is the use of the trial and error method. He must experiment with each role, noting his mistakes and drawing conclusions as he goes along. This thesis is a record of five such experiments in the portrayal of intoxicated characters. It is offered in the hope that the "errors" made during these experiments may reduce the "trials" of other novice actors.

While a student at the University of Kansas, I have had the opportunity of appearing in five dissimilar and varied roles which involved drinking or intoxication. All five roles were presented in the same theatre, before basically the same audience. Each of the five plays represents a different type of production; they include a fantastic tragic comedy, an operetta, a poetic drama, an Irish comedy and a satirical comedy. The five roles: an Army Captain, a comic diplomat, a Broadway actor, a blind Irishman and a university professor of English are, also, widely dissimilar. Likewise, a different type of drinking or intoxication is involved in each case; included are a tragic drunk, a comic tippler, a social drinker, an old soak and a comic drunk. The diversity of characters, plays and types of intoxication, plus the similarity of conditions under which all were performed, make the five roles excellent case studies for the investigation.

Each play was presented for four nights in Fraser Theatre at the University of Kansas. The audiences were composed of students and faculty members of the university and residents from the town of Lawrence, Kansas. In each case, the director of the play was a member of the University of Kansas Speech and Drama department faculty. Table I, on the following page, presents the specific data on each production.

A separate chapter will be devoted to each of these five roles. They will be discussed as individual and unrelated cases. For this reason, they will not be presented in chronological order and should not be regarded as a study of one actor's progression and development throughout five roles of intoxication. Few parallels will be drawn between the individual roles until the final chapter when an attempt will be made to assemble the findings so that they may be of use in future portrayals.

For purposes of classification, each of the five characters has been arbitrarily labeled as a specific type of drinker or drunk. The five chapters have subsequently been titled as follows:

Chapter II. The Captain: "A Tragic Drunk"

Chapter III. Mikel: "An Old Soak"

Chapter IV. Long: "A Social Drinker"

Chapter V. Patrick Clancy: "A Comic Tippler"

Chapter VI. Tommy Turner: "A Comic Drunk"

TABLE I

DATE OF PERFORMANCE	NAME OF PLAY	NAME OF AUTHOR	TYPE OF PLAY	NAME OF CHARACTER	TYPE OF CHARACTER	TYPE OF INTOXICATION	NAME OF DIRECTOR
October 1947	Joan of Lorraine	Maxwell Anderson	Poetic Drama	Long (Dunois)	Broadway Actor	The Social Drinker	Allen Crafton
December 1948	The Far-Off Hills	Lennox Robinson	Irish Comedy	Patrick Claney	Blind, Old Irishman	The Comic Tippler	Tom Shay
February 1949	Bury The Dead	Irwin Shaw	Fantastic Tragic-Comedy	The Captain	Army Captain	The Tragic Drunk	Harold Harvey
October 1949	The Male Animal	J. Thurber E. Nugent	Satirical Comedy	Tommy Turner	University Professor	The Comic Drunk	Frances Feist
February 1950	Sweethearts	H. Smith V. Herbert	Operetta	Mikel	Comic Diplomat	The Old Soak	Tom Shay

(Note: the designations in the chapter heads have been enclosed in quotation marks, since they are slang expressions or vulgarisms; but since these are both descriptive and widely used designations, they will be used hereafter with the quotations omitted.)

Obviously, it is difficult to fit any drinker or drinking situation into a general classification. These classifications were chosen only to make it possible for the reader to compare these five characters with similar characters in other plays, thereby giving the study a broader scope. A fuller, more thorough discussion of each of these classifications will be presented in the foreword of the individual chapters.

All five chapters, in the body of the thesis, will follow the same outline but the dissimilarity of the roles avoids a repetition of material. The following outline will be used in each chapter:

A. Foreword.

The foreword will include a discussion of the type of intoxication involved in the role. Similar characters in other plays, who would fit the same general classification, will be listed. Any further information about the role, which would not be discussed anywhere else in the chapter, will also be discussed.

B. Production Data.

The production data, which was listed in Table I, will be repeated for the individual production under consideration. Included under this heading will be the following information:

1. Date of the play's performance
2. Name of the play
3. Name of the playwright
4. Type of play, such as, a satirical comedy
5. Name of the character
6. Type of character, such as, a university professor
7. Type of intoxication, such as, a comic drunk
8. Name of the play's director

This material will be repeated in each chapter to eliminate the distraction of having to refer back to Table I.

C. Description of Character.

The character will be analysed from the viewpoint of the actor who is preparing to portray the role. The examination will be cursory but it will attempt to present a word picture of the individual and his personality.

D. Synopsis of the Portion of the Plot Which Concerns the Character.

To acquaint the reader with the play, in case he is not already familiar with it, the plot of the play will be summarized briefly. Since the chapter pertains to only one of the play's characters, nothing but the portion of the plot which concerns that particular character will be included. This may, at times, give unusual emphasis to a comparatively minor character in the play. In such cases, mention will be made of the character's relative importance.

E. Scenes Which Involve Drinking or Intoxication.

The scenes in which the drinking or intoxication take place will be discussed in detail. This portion of the chapter will consider some of the obvious problems which will be involved in the portrayal of intoxication and, also, some of the reasons for which the playwright has included intoxication in these scenes.

F. Developing and Interpreting the Scenes of Intoxication.

The principal portion of the chapter will be the case history of the development and interpretation of the role. Only the factors which affected the portrayal of the intoxication will be discussed. Naturally, the portrayal of the role involved more than just the factor of intoxication but only that phase is of

interest to this thesis.

G. Audience Reaction.

Any ideas about the portrayal of intoxication which were obtained by observing the audience's reaction to the presentation will be mentioned in this final portion of each chapter. Usually, these will be stated not as ideas but as an observation of how the audience apparently reacted to the interpretation.

All five chapters will follow the foregoing outline.

The concluding chapter of the thesis will attempt to collect, assemble and correlate the knowledge gained from the five experiences into a discussion of the development, interpretation and portrayal of an intoxicated character. No attempt will be made, in the final chapter, to establish any hard and fast rules or formulas for the portrayal of intoxicated characters. The thesis is presented only as a study of the development and interpretation of five roles which involved drinking or intoxication, in the hope that the five case studies may provide some insight into a widely used but seldom discussed phase of the art of acting.

Chapter II

THE CAPTAIN: "A TRAGIC DRUNK"

A. Foreword.

The name "tragic drunk" will be used to denote a person whose overindulgence has serious consequences and whose character has been made tragic or pathetic through drink. From a dramatic standpoint, tragic drunkenness is intended to evoke the audience's sympathy or sympathetic understanding. As to the degree of intoxication, it is assumed that the character has gone beyond the point of slight intoxication. This type of role did not become widely used until the advent of Realism in the modern theatre. There are references in older plays, in Hamlet for example, to the serious aspects of drinking, but the actual presentation of the drinking itself was never played in a tragic vein. Consequently, most of the characters who would fall under the classification of tragic drunks are found in modern plays, such as: Joe Morgan in Ten Nights In A Barroom, Captain Boyle in Sean O'Casey's Juno and the Paycock and Branwell Bronte in Dan Totheroh's Moor Born.

An explanation is necessary in regard to the role of The Captain in Irwin Shaw's Bury The Dead. The Captain is only an incidental character in Shaw's play. However, in the adaptation used for the University of Kansas Players'

production in 1949 the role of The Captain was enlarged so that he became the play's principal character. Bury The Dead presumably concerns "the war which will begin tomorrow night." The many references to World War I conditions in Shaw's original version, which was written in 1936, necessitated a rewrite of the play for the post-World War II production. I assisted Professor Allen Crafton, Chairman of the Department of Speech and Drama at the University of Kansas, in this adaptation. It is the character of The Captain of the adapted version which is under consideration.

B. Production Data.

1. Date: February, 1949
2. Play: Bury The Dead
3. Author: Irwin Shaw
    a. Adapted by Allen Crafton and Gene Courtney
4. Type of play: Fantastic tragic comedy
5. Character: The Captain
6. Type of character: Army Captain
7. Type of intoxication: A tragic drunk
8. Director: Harold Harvey

C. Description of Character.

The Captain in Bury The Dead is a United States Army Captain who is in command of a front-line company during

wartime. Actually, The Captain is more than just an individual. He is representative of a certain type of twentieth century thinker. He is a product of a so-called "Age of Reason." For him, anything is possible but everything must have an explanation. He is a sensitive, intelligent young man of vision and imagination. The play does not state his age but he is probably between twenty-five and thirty-five years old. A younger man would probably not be a Captain and an older man would probably not be in command of a front-line company. He is not a professional soldier, but the respect shown him by both his subordinates and superiors indicates that he is a good leader. He might possibly have been a college instructor as a civilian since he states that he is a scientist and a philosopher. The Captain appears to be an agnostic who was reared in a Christian home. His function in the play is three-fold: 1) He is the spokesman for the play, the author and the audience. He is both the principal character and the chorus. 2) The Captain provides the thread of continuity for the many scenes. 3) Finally, since the play is a fantastic tragic comedy, The Captain is intended to supply both comedy and tragedy.

C. Synopsis of the Portion of the Plot Which Concerns the Character.

Six men from The Captain's company have been killed but refuse to lie down and be buried. These men, who believe

that war is futile, have taken the stand that the only hope for peace lies in the refusal of men to be killed. The higher authorities order The Captain to see that the men are buried immediately. News of the fantastic occurrence might spread and undermine the morale of other servicemen, possibly causing the ultimate loss of the war. The play concerns The Captain's many attempts to force the corpses into their graves.

The Captain has the men examined by a doctor to make sure that they are really dead. They are. He has the generals talk to the men. One general appeals to their patriotism and the other general orders the men to lie down. Both attempts fail. The Captain tries to reason with the men. Far from swaying their views, he finds himself agreeing with them. He recognizes the injustice of the situation, yet he is also aware that world-wide hysteria and chaos could result if the corpses continue to stand. Searching desperately for an answer, The Captain grasps at the possibility that the occurrence might be an act of God. The Chaplain disagrees. A Senate investigating committee tries in vain to convince the corpses. Though he is disgusted with himself for thinking of such an underhanded trick, The Captain suggests bringing the corpses' wives, mothers and sweethearts to the scene. Even they are unable to change the situation. Finally, the general orders The Captain to turn a machine gun on the corpses. The Captain scornfully

flips a lighted cigarette at the general and leaves the scene. The general fires the gun himself but the corpses climb out of their grave and walk through the bullets unharmed.

D. Scenes Which Involve Drinking or Intoxication.

The role of The Captain is a study of a frustrated man who passes through the progressive stages of drunkenness. In each scene, The Captain becomes increasingly more intoxicated. There is some comedy to be derived from his disrespectful attitude toward his superiors. For the most part, though, his intoxication is intended as tragic.

The Captain starts drinking when first confronted by the living-dead men. He continues drinking throughout the remainder of the play. He undoubtedly consumes many pints of liquor although the script calls for him to drink on stage only twice. The play does not definitely state the time interval that elapses between scenes. It would take a minimum of a week for the events to occur. During this time, The Captain not only gets drunk, he stays drunk and gets drunker.

The first recognition of The Captain's intoxication comes in the second scene. His tactless conversation causes one of the generals to inquire if he has been drinking. He replies in the affirmative. In the next scene, The Captain takes his first drink on stage.

The climax of The Captain's intoxication takes place in one of the final scenes. With bottle in hand, he curses himself for having betrayed the six men's friendship. The scene is very short but its principal function is to show The Captain in his most depressed stage of intoxication.

The adapted version of the play had The Captain lead the corpses out of their grave and over the hill during the final scene. This was changed to have The Captain merely walk away and leave the corpses to solve their own problem. This change was slight but very important. It necessitated changing the interpretation of The Captain's character. In one ending, The Captain emerges victorious. In the other, alcohol and the situation defeat The Captain.

A change is wrought in The Captain's character by his drinking. Alcohol causes him to do things and say things that he would not ordinarily do or say. It finally effects a disintegration of his personality. At the start of the play, The Captain is an heroic, intelligent leader. By the end of the play, he is a confused, stumbling sot who is disgusted with himself and all humanity.

His increasing intoxication contributes to the suspense and tension of the drama. There is no answer to the problem and The Captain is the first to realize that. As his frustration, disgust and drunkenness mount, the suspense and tension mount simultaneously.

Since The Captain is the principal character in the play, it can be said that intoxication is one of the principal ingredients of Bury The Dead. It is used to establish the mood and to develop the plot. It provides a "build" for the drama; it symbolizes the frustration and futility of the situation. Intoxication releases some of The Captain's inhibitions and provides for changes and developments within The Captain's character. Finally, it provides both comedy and tragedy.

E. Developing and Interpreting the Scenes of Intoxication.

The Captain is a tragic drunk. His drinking has very serious consequences. Similarly, it is motivated by serious problems. He drinks because he is faced with a problem which he cannot solve. He drinks because he cannot find a reasonable explanation for the occurrence. He drinks because he senses the great injustice to the men and because he realizes the futility of their cause. He drinks because he is disgusted with the generals, with the underhanded methods employed to overcome the men, with mankind in general and with himself. He needs a stimulant and he needs relief from the torture of a confused mind.

His resort to alcohol is not necessarily an indication of emotional instability. Of all the characters in the play, he is under the greatest stress. Furthermore, he is not the only person who cracks under the strain. The

sergeant and the guard detail desert. One general dies of heart failure and the other commits suicide. The wives, mothers and sweethearts of the six men all experience some sort of hysteria. The Captain's drinking is as understandable as it is tragic.

Having had a hand in the writing of Bury The Dead and the subsequent creation of The Captain, I assumed that the task of interpreting the role would be simplified by the fact that I had already created, in my own mind, a vivid visualization of the character. I was familiar with The Captain's function as a character in the play. Acting the role would not be a matter of interpretation; it would be a problem of providing a body for a man who already existed.

My familiarity with the play gave confidence but the confidence was tempered with caution. While writing, I had become sincerely fond of The Captain. I wanted to be able to present him so that the audience would see and understand him as I did. The director's interpretation of The Captain differed slightly from mine. Aware of my strong attachment to The Captain of my visualization, the director hesitated to tell me about his interpretation. He was also afraid of encroaching upon my rights as playwright. This was overlooking, of course, the important function of a director in interpreting a play.

My attempt at "living the role" soon had me mired in a bog of unnecessary details. I had been unable to get an

objective view of the character. This gave the director a foothold. Almost imperceptibly, he eased me into a characterization which was compatible to both of our interpretations.

Theoretically, the problem in this case was to make The Captain's progressive intoxication, for twenty-four scenes, believable. Although Bury The Dead was called a fantastic tragic comedy, it was acted realistically. Only the idea and the settings were in the vein of fantasy. Even the settings approached realism. Costumes, make-up and properties were starkly realistic. The Captain's intoxication would have to progress according to recognized standards.

My first attempts to portray this increasing drunkenness resulted in The Captain's reaching his peak of intoxication too early in the play. At about half-way through the play, The Captain was as drunk as I knew how to make him without having him fall flat on his face. Gradually, this was smoothed out so that the peak was reached in the final scenes. Then, it became apparent that such prolonged intoxication would become irritating to the audience. They might weary of seeing a character stay drunk for such a long period of time. In most cases, if a character is to be intoxicated for a long period of time, that intoxication is usually of a mild or slight form. The Captain's extreme intoxication might cause an audience to lose sym-

pathy with the character. If that happened, the audience would be more disgusted than amused or moved by The Captain's drunkenness. I tried to tone down the intoxication without losing the effect of The Captain's frustration.

I had been exaggerating or enlarging upon The Captain's intoxication as the scenes progressed. Since this did not prove entirely successful, I started looking for an alternate plan. There are certain physical reactions which seem to accompany, and consequently suggest or connote, intoxication. The alternate plan of interpretation was to select one or two of these outward indications of intoxication as signposts for each scene. One signpost could be used at the onset of intoxication and one or two could be added in each of the scenes which followed, to indicate the increase of drunkenness. Before this could be done, it was necessary to determine what these physical reactions were. Included in the list which was compiled and used were:

1. Lose or partial loss of coordination
2. Loss of balance
3. Articulatory difficulty in speech
4. Release of inhibitions
5. Stimulation and/or depression of spirit
6. Unfocusing of eyes and subsequent difficulties of sight
7. Loss of dignity and/or possible overattempt to maintain dignity

8. Increase of intensity of emotion
9. Unusual or confused thought patterns
10. Nausea or drowsiness as possible aftereffects of overindulgence
11. Unkempt appearance as suggested by unshaven beard and disarrangement of hair and clothing

As an example of how this list was used, if The Captain's speech were affected by the alcohol in one scene, his coordination would not be affected until a later scene. This indicated the various degrees of intoxication without making it necessary to exaggerate and emphasize the drunkenness excessively.

The Captain's intoxication is not the main theme of the play. It is used only to show the seriousness of the situation and one possible effect of the fantastic happenings. If his intoxication intrudes upon the principal ideas of the play, it is not accomplishing its purpose or function. It would be better to eliminate the intoxication altogether if it is distracting. In this case, it was not necessary to eliminate the intoxication totally but there was a definite need for scenes or moments of respite. This was finally provided by having The Captain attempt to be sober and try to conceal his intoxication when in the presence of certain other characters.

After toning down and smoothing out the intoxication, there still remained the problem of playing for both comedy

and tragedy. The play required The Captain's intoxication to be both comic and tragic, often in the same scene. I tried, in my portrayal, to distinguish clearly between that which was intended as funny and that which was intended as serious. The greatest difficulty came in trying to portray the serious elements of the intoxication. The Captain's drunkenness was so depressing that I feared an audience might tire of it and lose patience with The Captain. I finally hit upon the possibility that the audience might be more receptive to The Captain's intoxication if they were in full agreement with his motivations for drinking. Consequently, I concentrated on establishing these motivations for the audience. I felt sure that if the audience were in sympathy with The Captain, they would distinguish between the comedy and tragedy more easily.

The curtain was not lowered between scenes. Set changes were made very quickly during a blackout. Between many scenes I had to run across the stage, jump onto a moving platform and be in position when the lights came on. This distraction, at the end of every scene, made it difficult to build the character from scene to scene. By the time I had gone through these gymnastics, I had lost the mood of the previous scene. There was little that could be done about this except to rehearse the changes often enough that they would not require much concentration. Fortunately, the set had been constructed in advance of the rehearsals.

By opening night, I was able to make the scene changes without completely losing the mood of the previous scenes.

G. Audience Reaction.

Portraying The Captain's intoxication as both comic and tragic was not as difficult as I had imagined it would be. The comedy was especially easy. The audience was ready and eager to laugh at The Captain's intoxication. The play is so morbid that they were anxious for comic relief. When The Captain started becoming drunk, the audience expected him to be funny. The difficulty came in trying to produce a tragic effect with the drunkenness without having The Captain become an unsympathetic character. This was largely accomplished for me by the excellent portrayal of the general by Tom Shay, a fellow member of the cast. The audience quickly developed an antagonistic attitude toward the general. Likewise, they developed a great affection for the six corpses. They laughed readily when The Captain's intoxication freed him to be disrespectful to the general. They were equally sympathetic with his frustration at not being able to help the six men. The changes from comedy to tragedy were effected easily and in the proper places.

In a few places, especially at the start of the show, the audience laughed where a laugh was not expected. At the first sight of The Captain's bottle, many laughed even though the scene was very serious. Similar laughs came

whenever references were made to The Captain's drinking during a tensely dramatic scene. Often, the laugh was sympathetic. It indicated that the audience did not blame The Captain for drinking. Nevertheless, the laughs were out of place and destroyed some of the mood of those scenes.

In the final analysis, The Captain had not been written as clearly as I had visualised him while writing. Neither did his portrayal measure up to the hopes that I had had for him. He was sympathetic but hopelessly futile. His intoxication was at times effective drama and at other times distracting. It might have helped if The Captain had been played as an older man. There are so many things that a young man does not understand and cannot solve that we lose respect for one who gets hopelessly drunk because he is unable to cope with a situation, even such a fantastic situation as occurs in Bury The Dead.

Chapter III

MIKEL: "AN OLD SOAK"

A. Foreword.

The old soak has become a stereotyped character. He is usually thought of as an alcoholic who is perfectly content with his affliction. His excessive drinking has taken its toll and he is easily recognized by his physical appearance. The old soak is a stock character in the theatre. Although he is sometimes used as a tragic character, his own indifference to his plight makes him a more appropriate character for comedy. Some notable old soaks in other plays have been: The old soak in Don Marquis' The Old Soak, Martin in Allen and Jessica Crafton's The Strength of Ten and Christopher Sly in Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew.

B. Production Data.

1. Date: February, 1950
2. Play: Sweethearts
3. Author: Harry B. Smith and Victor Herbert
4. Type of play: Operetta
5. Character: Mikel
6. Type of Character: Comic diplomat
7. Type of intoxication: An old soak
8. Director: Tom Shay

C. Description of Character.

Mikel, in the Victor Herbert operetta, Sweethearts, is a "has-been" diplomat. He is at least fifty years old. He was a top diplomat twenty years ago. By his own confession, he is a scheming, deal-making politician. He is clever at assuming disguises and enjoys flirting with pretty girls. Mikel is bold, brash, flippant and self-assured.

The role is strictly burlesque comedy or farce. Mikel acts as both narrator and comic relief for the operetta. Most of the operetta's exposition is handled by Mikel and his is the longest comedy role in the play.

D. Synopsis of the Portion of the Plot Which Concerns the Character.

Mikel is a former diplomat of the mythical kingdom of Zilania. During the revolution, twenty years ago, he fled to Belgium with the heir apparent, an infant princess. He left the baby in a tulip garden, near a laundry. The princess was discovered by the laundry's proprietress and reared as an adopted daughter.

Now that the people of Zilania have tired of their republic and wish to restore the monarchy, Mikel is attempting to locate the lost princess. If he can find the girl and reveal her true identity to her, he is confident that she will reward him with an appointment to some high office.

He disguises himself as the long lost husband of the proprietress so that he will have an excuse to stay around the laundry. Mikel makes a mistake in identification and tries to proclaim the wrong girl as the lost princess.

When the rightful heir is discovered, Mikel's hopes for appointment to high office are shattered. All of his frantic efforts have been futile.

E. Scenes Which Involve Drinking or Intoxication.

Most comedians usually alter a burlesque comedy part to fit their own individual style rather than attempt to adapt themselves to the role. Having no particular style of my own, it was suggested that I might interpret Mikel as an old soak. It is reasonable to assume that the old, has-been politician is an excessive drinker. It would be in keeping with the rest of his character and would provide opportunities for comic business.

I assumed that interpreting Mikel as an old soak would mean that he would have to be slightly tipsy throughout the show. This would be using intoxication as a device for characterisation and for motivating abnormal business.

F. Developing and Interpreting the Scenes of Intoxication.

The idea of interpreting Mikel as an old soak was not originated until after I had tried unsuccessfully to burlesque the role without imitating well-known slapstick

comedians, such as Groucho Marx, W. C. Fields and Bobby Clark. Each attempt had proven to be a direct copy of someone's style.

I had also hoped that playing Mikel as slightly tipsy would explain or account for his boldness. Mikel's lines are so brash that he could easily become an unsympathetic character. The "old soak" interpretation was intended to give Mikel a mellow charm to counteract his flippancy.

To suggest Mikel's tipsiness and his long attachment to liquor, I affected a throaty, "whiskey" voice and slurred my articulation slightly. No loss of coordination was suggested but an attempt was made to indicate that Mikel was never too sure of his actions. Unfortunately this resulted in an apparent indefiniteness of my gestures and movements. I altered this to make each of Mikel's gestures seem studied, as though he were afraid that his coordination might fail him. A few additional gestures, such as wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, were inserted to help reveal his alcoholic background. The director and the cast seemed pleased with the new characterization.

Mikel's tipsiness continued until a visitor at rehearsal, who was not familiar with our ideas about Mikel, stated that Mikel appeared to be more drunk than zany. This was the first notice we had received that the tipsiness was not accomplishing what we had intended. After backtracking a bit and surveying the problem, we reached

several conclusions. Mikel had not been written as an old soak; we had inserted the intoxication angle. The tipsiness did not fit for two reasons. First, a steady drinker, one who has been drinking for years, should be able to hold his liquor. If he cannot, he approaches pathological alcoholism. To be humorous, he must enjoy drinking rather than crave alcohol. Secondly, Mikel was expected to be zany and ridiculous; no one needed an explanation of his actions. He should be a clown or buffoon, a modern harlequin. We had been overlooking the fact that Mikel was a slapstick comedy character in an operetta. The tipsiness provided motivation for his actions when, actually, motivation was neither necessary nor desirable.

There was still the consideration of softening the blow of Mikel's cockiness. I decided to experiment with make-up. If the make-up could show that Mikel was an old soak, it might not be necessary to restate that fact in my acting. The make-up pattern which I finally decided to use was a combination of two styles. It was an exaggerated copy of Henry Major's calendar portrait, "The Gay Philosopher," and approached the make-up style of a circus clown.

The entire face was given a flushed appearance by using deep red make-up which was mixed with a lighter base. Bright red was used to accent my chin and the end of my nose. I also freckled my nose with black dots so that it simulated the enlarged, pitted, bulbous nose of a bar-fly.

The eyebrows were painted triangularly, which made Mikel seem constantly quizzical. The eyes and mouth were exaggerated accordingly. I stopped shaving three days before opening night. This gave me a stubbly beard which I darkened with black eye-shadow. As a final touch, I grayed my hair with corn starch and did not comb it.

G. Audience Reaction.

The audience accepted Mikel as a comedy character. The comedy stemmed, to some extent, from the suggestion that he was an "old soak." This suggestion was given them through appearance and make-up. In all probability, they took their individual cues from this and imagined him as much of an "old soak" as they wished. Actual drunkenness in this case would have defeated the purpose and would perhaps not have been convincing to the audience.

Chapter IV

LONG: "A SOCIAL DRINKER"

A. Foreword.

The social drinker is a widely used label for the person whose drinking is motivated by a desire for social acceptance. His drinking habits are erratic, depending upon the occasion or situation. Obviously, a character could commence with social drinking and, as his intoxication increases, become a comic or a tragic drunk. Usually, however, moderation is the keynote of the social drinker in a play. Social drinking provides a friendly atmosphere, releases inhibitions slightly and offers opportunities for business and movement on the stage. Naturally, social drinking is a convenient and expedient device for the playwright and, consequently, social drinkers can be found in almost any play, especially in most society plays of the present day such as plays by Rachel Crothers, Somerset Maugham, Noel Coward and Philip Barry.

B. Production Data.

1. Date: October, 1947
2. Play: Joan of Lorraine
3. Author: Maxwell Anderson
4. Type of play: Poetic drama

5. Character: Long (Dunois, Bastard of Orleans)

6. Type of character: Broadway actor

7. Type of intoxication: A social drinker

8. Director: Allen Crafton

C. Description of Character.

Long, in Maxwell Anderson's Joan of Lorraine, is a Broadway actor. At present, he is playing the role of Dunois, Bastard of Orleans, in a play about Joan of Arc. Considering the commonness of type-casting in Broadway productions, Long is probably above average height and well-built physically. He would have a deep, pleasant voice and would move with the grace of a person trained in poise. His age is arbitrary but it is likely to be in the vicinity of thirty. The dialogue reveals that Long is a good-natured man of reasonable intelligence. He has a well-balanced sense of humor and is well liked by both his superiors and co-workers.

At various intervals, Long is seen enacting the role of Dunois during a rehearsal. Consequently, to act the role of Long, it is also necessary to develop and portray the character of Dunois. Dunois, Bastard of Orleans, is an historical figure. He was the half-brother of the Dauphin and a general in Joan's army. Dunois is a nobleman of royal, if ignoble, birth and a dashing, successful soldier. His royal heritage is apparent in his intelligence, poise

and sympathetic nature. His army background reveals itself in his gruffness, courage, determination and military acumen.

One strong similarity exists between the two roles of Long and Dunois. Both were written for the obvious purpose of "feeding lines" to the principal characters of the play. They are minor roles whose main functions are to break up monologues and to assist in the exposition of the plot.

D. Synopsis of the Portion of the Plot Which Concerns the Character.

Joan of Lorraine presumably deals with a group of actors at a rehearsal of a play about Joan of Arc. In actuality, the story of the French saint completely dominates the production. The "play in rehearsal" theme is merely a device of the playwright to provide for three things: 1) Presenting the play about Joan without expensive costumes and scenery; 2) narration for the rather loosely-knit series of scenes and 3) an opportunity to present the playwright's sermon or thesis.

The play-within-a-play, the portion concerning Joan, is written in a romantic and poetic style. The remainder of the show, the "actors at rehearsal" portion, is realism. Therefore, the dual role of Long and Dunois requires two distinctly separate styles of presentation.

Basically, the plot of Joan of Lorraine is very simple. The play which is being rehearsed follows the life of Joan of Arc from the time that she hears the "voices" to the time of her execution. Scenes from her life are presented and in between those scenes the actors discuss the play with their director.

D. Scenes Which Involve Drinking or Intoxication.

The second act opens with the actors returning from lunch. As everyone stands around waiting for the afternoon rehearsal to begin, a discussion of the play's thesis ensues. Long starts the discussion by asking the director if the play has any real meaning. He prefaces this inquiry with the statement that the other members of the cast had fed him three or four Manhattans to build his courage. He continues to ask questions about the play until the rehearsal starts. He then steps into the role of Dunois and no further mention is made of his three or four Manhattans.

Long's intoxication is of short duration. The playwright uses it to motivate Long's numerous questions. Each of these questions is answered by a short sermon by the director. Once the intoxication has served its purpose, the playwright abandons it. No development in Long's personality or character results from this drinking. In no way does it have any obvious bearing on his later actions in the play.

In this case, intoxication is not used for comedy, tragedy or character development. Its only purpose is to loosen the character's tongue so that he can ask questions which are essential to the exposition of the play's thesis.

F. Developing and Interpreting the Scenes of Intoxication.

Long is a social drinker. His drinking has no serious consequences. His one scene of intoxication is not important enough to rate any subsequent comment in the later dialogue. As would be the case of a social drinker, he announces that he has had a few drinks, everyone laughs and the statement is forgotten.

Since the playwright provides little information about Long or his intoxication, it is necessary to examine the situation more thoroughly. Were Long a heavy or consistent drinker, he probably would not mention that he had had three or four Manhattans before coming to rehearsal. He would be more likely to conceal this information. Producers and directors are leery of employing actors whose alcoholic habits might cause them to miss performances or arrive drunk. If this were true of Long, the news that he had been drinking might jeopardize his job. When alcoholic actors are cast in a production, they are usually on some sort of probation and someone is keeping an eye on them. The director laughs at Long's report of the Manhattans, so, evidently, Long's drinking habits are not serious enough to

warrant concern.

The first step, then, is to determine Long's motivation for drinking the three or four Manhattans during the lunch hour. Long answers this question himself. Everyone has been wanting to ask the director some pretty ticklish questions but no one has dared. Long is one of the few who call the director by his first name. Obviously, they are well enough acquainted for Long to make the delicate inquiries without offending. He prefaces his question with the statement that the others had "fed" him the Manhattans to give him courage. That scene in the restaurant could be easily reconstructed. Long and the others were having a drink with their meal. Someone started coaxing Long, good-naturedly, to ask the director if the play really says anything important. Long declined and others joined in the coaxing. Finally, it was suggested that they buy Long another drink. A few drinks later, Long agreed to the plan. They all returned to rehearsal and waited for the director to arrive so that the fun could begin.

It was with this mental concept of Long and his intoxication that I first approached the role in rehearsal. It is important to note that this was my first role in a production at the University of Kansas. I was unfamiliar with the director and my fellow actors. I was aware that my future chances for larger roles were dependent upon my success in this minor part. I also knew that the scene

of intoxication provided the best opportunity for proving myself.

I was determined to do a thorough job of acting in the scene of intoxication. I studied the scene carefully for bits of information which might reveal more of Long's mental attitude. I reasoned that Long would have had just enough drinks to release his inhibitions. He probably would feel a little foolish but, as an actor, he would enjoy receiving the special attention. In regard to the questions about the play, he would be very serious. He would attempt to conceal his intoxication to a certain extent, to lend gravity to his inquiries. Long likes the director and would not want him to think that he was being flippant or sarcastic.

In developing the portrayal, I assumed that the releasing of Long's inhibitions would be accompanied by a relaxing of his physical tension. His movements would be a little more free and relaxed. His gestures would tend to be broader than normal. I doubted that there would be any loss of coordination. Long has to work this afternoon and his friends would not urge him to drink more than they knew him capable of holding.

Facial expressions could serve to suggest the intoxication and Long's mental attitude. A foolish smile, for example, would indicate both his slight embarrassment and his released inhibitions. When he starts his discussion with the director, Long would be inclined to change his

expression to reveal his earnestness. A slight exaggeration of the seriousness would help suggest the intoxication.

Long's diction and speech pattern could be affected by the alcohol but not necessarily. Since the decision was arbitrary, I took into consideration the fact that Long must step from this scene into the portrayal of Dunois. Due to the construction of the play, Dunois is actually more important than Long. If, in this scene, Long seemed to have a thick tongue, it would be hard to believe that he could correct his diction completely for the portrayal of Dunois. On the other hand, Long has very few chances as a character. This one scene is about his only opportunity to register with the audience. Thick-tongued speech would provide for comic possibilities. Eager to make the scene memorable, I elected to use the drunken speech pattern.

The natural result of this approach to the role, and the one scene in particular, was a tenseness which defeated my attempts to portray the relaxed, uninhibited character of my visualization. The inarticulate speech which I had affected for the scene would have been suitable for a drunk who could no longer lift his head. My jerky, erratic gestures revealed all of my inhibitions and none of Long's release of inhibitions.

My facial expressions must have been equally ludicrous and out of place. I was directed to play the entire scene, seated on a stool at Down Left Stage. The character to whom my lines were addressed was placed at Up Center Stage. This meant that the entire scene of intoxication would be played in a three-quarter turn away from the audience.

After several rehearsals, my foolish smile was still a sickly grin. Long still appeared to be so drunk that he could never have reasonably been able to play the part of Dunois. In desperation, I went to the other extreme. Long became completely sober. Without the intoxication, I had little to utilize for characterization. I was just an actor, reciting lines of dialogue on a stage. At this point, I was directed to try to "hit it in the middle"; to find a characterization that was somewhere in between my two previous attempts.

I was discovering the difficulty of portraying a character who has had "a few drinks." It would have been much easier, it seemed, if Long were completely drunk. It would also have been easier if Long had not been a dual role. The intoxication had to be noticeable in Long but not in Dunois. Although I had been aware of it in my visualization of the character, I had not been able to reveal Long's mental attitude and his motivation for drinking in my interpretation on the stage.

For a few days, I cursed the director, the playwright and the role. I blamed the director for not having given me more specific direction. The playwright had placed the character in an awkward position, using the intoxication as a device and then ignoring it. The role itself was hazily written and, consequently, hard to interpret. Finally, I got around to evaluating myself. All of these things had been true but there was a reason for them which I had overlooked. Long is a minor character; he is of little importance except as a line feeder. In my greed, I had been trying to make him too important.

With this thought, I started anew. The visualization of the character had been accurate. It provided good background for the development and interpretation of the scene. The mistake had been in trying to reveal all of that background information in the interpretation. I had been trying to do too much.

Drinking to excess is fairly common in this country. The effects of alcohol are easily recognized by most of the people who comprise theatre audiences. Many people are able, in a quick glance, to give a rough estimate of the extent of someone's intoxication. Such an audience can supply more with their imaginations than an actor can give them. The subtle suggestion of intoxication serves better than trying to include every facet of the intoxication.

Unconsciously, I had been considering Long's three or four Manhattans a secret between Long and myself. I had overlooked the fact that the audience hears him tell that the others fed him the drinks to build his courage. I was trying to tell the audience something that they already knew.

The scene was not intended for comedy and it was an error to attempt to convert it into comedy. The thick tongue was abandoned and in its place was inserted a slower rate of speaking. Deliberation replaced sloppiness throughout the interpretation.

Unfortunately, the opening performance of the play was but a week away when I made this discovery. Most of the other actors had their characters well established and were polishing their interpretations. I was starting over. It was simpler to develop the second interpretation, however, because the character now fitted into the play. Before, it had been a unit in itself. I had overestimated the effect of three or four Manhattans on a person who is accustomed to moderate drinking. I had underestimated that person's will power and his sense of propriety. The character had stuck out like a sore thumb in the play because I, as an actor, had been trying to make my portrayal outstanding.

G. Audience Reaction.

Because of the late start on the second interpretation,

the final characterization was not as smooth as it should or could have been. The scene was not a highlight of the show, but Long served his required purpose of motivating the tedious thesis of the play. The shift from Long to Dunois was effected without difficulty. Long was sufficiently intoxicated to be believable and yet sober enough to step into the more important role of Dunois. This was largely accomplished by underplaying and minimizing the intoxication, leaving the remainder to be supplied by the audience's imagination.

Chapter V

PATRICK CLANCY: "A COMIC TIPPLER"

A. Foreword.

The comic tippler is a character who, although not addicted to alcohol, enjoys drinking and always has liquor handy. His drinking is not excessive enough to warrant grave concern or to have serious consequences. He just nips at the bottle occasionally. The tippler is almost always used as a comic character. The humor stems not so much from the effect of the liquor on the tippler but from his enjoyment of drinking. Examples of comic tipplers in other plays are: Falstaff in Shakespeare's Henry IV, Elwood P. Dowd in Mary Chase's Harvey, Menaechmus in Plautus' The Menaechmi and the old woman in Frederick Isham's and Max Marcin's Three Live Ghosts.

B. Production Data.

1. Date: December, 1948
2. Play: The Far-Off Hills
3. Author: Lennox Robinson
4. Type of play: Irish comedy
5. Character: Patrick (Paddy) Clancy
6. Type of character: Blind, old Irishman
7. Type of intoxication: A comic tippler

8. Director: Tom Shay

C. Description of Character.

Patrick (Paddy) Clancy, in Lennox Robinson's Irish comedy, The Far-Off Hills, is a comic character whose humor stems from a spirited attempt to overcome a pathetic situation. Paddy is a lonely, little, fifty year old widower who is dominated by his eldest daughter. Near-blindness, caused by cataracts, has limited his activities during recent years. Although he carries a cane, Paddy is quite dependent upon his daughters to lead him around the house. He is forced to spend most of his time seated in a chair by the fireplace. During happier times, whenever Paddy and his cronies got together, either at Paddy's home or at the local tavern, the air was sure to be filled with pipe smoke, bawdy tales and the smell of good Irish whiskey. This is still Paddy's idea of a good time. The dialogue would indicate that Paddy tends to feel sorry for himself. Borderin[illegible] tragic. Paddy, nevertheless, must supply [illegible]he m[illegible]e play's humor.

[illegible] Portion of the Plot Which Concerns the

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D. Synopsis of the Portion of the Plot Which Concerns the Character.

Paddy Clancy's near-blindness has not only restricted his social activities, it has left him dependent upon, and at the mercy of, his eldest daughter, Marian. A straight-

laced girl, Marian is anything but a "chip off the old block." The necessity of caring for her father and her two younger sisters has forced her to abandon temporarily her plans for entering a convent. She compensates for her thwarted ambition by ruling the household, including Paddy, with a firm hand.

Marian regards smoking and drinking as evil, so she forbids Paddy these luxuries. Likewise, she gives Paddy strict orders not to invite his friends to visit him. For him, the house becomes a prison with Marian as the chief jailer.

This feeling of oppression is shared with Paddy by his two younger daughters. Unlike their older sister, Ducky and Pet have inherited their father's devilish spirit. With teen-age ingenuity, they try to promote a step-mother for themselves so that Marian will be free to enter her "blessed convent." The girls' choice, Susie Tynan, is a middle-aged woman of whom Paddy has been fond for years. Were it not for his blindness, Paddy would be inclined to go along with the plan. He reasons, however, that a blind man with two teen-age daughters is not a very good marital bargain. He resigns himself to waiting for the day when his cataracts will be ripe for an operation.

The problem is resolved by Susie's proposal to Paddy and Marian's surprise engagement to a dashing, young newcomer to the town.

E. Scenes Which Involve Drinking or Intoxication.

During the first act, Paddy wheedles Marian into allowing his two cronies, Oliver and Dick, to visit him. Naturally, the two ne'er-do-wells sneak a bottle into the house. The three men have a couple of drinks onstage before they are interrupted by Marian's return to the room. Paddy suggests that they slip away to his room. Attempting to hide the whiskey, they exit. Twelve pages of dialogue later, Paddy and his friends come onstage again. It can be assumed that they have been drinking during the interim. Paddy remains onstage for the remainder of the act. Marian catches Paddy with liquor on his breath and rebukes him. When Susie enters, Paddy tells her his troubles. It is here that Susie proposes. Susie exits as Marian reenters, leaving Paddy the chore of informing Marian of the engagement. Mustering his courage, Paddy commences the explanation as the curtain falls.

The second drinking scene comes in the third act. Paddy and Susie have returned from their honeymoon. To their surprise, they find that Marian is in love and is a changed woman. She presents Paddy a box of cigars and a decanter of whiskey. Everyone drinks a toast as the final curtain falls.

Paddy's drinking helps explain and identify his character rather than motivate his actions or effect a personality change. It is used for comedy and for the expository pur-

pose of showing what Paddy's life was like before he came under Marian's domination. It also signifies or symbolises his desire for freedom and independence. The drinking in the final act is very slight but it signifies that Paddy has won his fight.

F. Developing and Interpreting the Scenes of Intoxication.

Patrick Clancy is a comic tippler. His drinking is not an event, it is a basic part of his character. He is not a chronic alcoholic, however. He drinks for pleasure, not from habit. His strong desire for liquor, during the course of the play, is not motivated by the cravings of an habitual alcoholic but by the stubborn refusal of a spirited little man to be dominated.

The alcohol would be more likely to serve as a stimulant for Paddy than as an intoxicant. A tippler, such as Paddy, would be capable of consuming several drinks before showing the same effects that a less experienced drinker might evince after an equal number of drinks. Dick and Oliver bring a flask with them. These three men could certainly drink the contents of one flask without being more than slightly stimulated. The drinking would be more apt to change Paddy's frame of mind than it would to affect his physical actions. Probably the only noticeable effect would be the heightening of Paddy's spirits.

This is very fortunate because the problem of acting the role of Paddy would be complicated considerably if extreme intoxication were involved. Acquiring in Irish brogue is difficult enough in itself, without having to develop the speech of a drunken Irishman.

In searching for character and for motivations, I had relied heavily upon the play's dialogue. Paddy's lines seemed to indicate that he feels sorry for himself. His apparent self-pity led me to believe that he was drinking to fortify his courage and to relieve the atmosphere of oppression. Throughout the scene, Paddy is complaining and the other characters are sympathizing with him. With this interpretation, the pathos of the situation dominated the humor completely. Paddy was too depressed to be funny. His problems were made to seem so serious that the audience would be more concerned than amused.

The play's director was also appearing in the role of Oliver. He, too, had been caught in the current and was playing in the same vein of pathos. In fact, the entire play seemed to be a tragedy with a happy ending. Realizing that Paddy was the key figure in the play's comedy, the director and I had several private discussions about Paddy's character. We both agreed that Paddy needed to be funnier but neither of us seemed to know how to achieve that effect. We decided that it would probably be funnier if Paddy seemed to be enjoying his slight intoxication. An

attempt was made to play Paddy in a happier mood. The drinking scene was played with gusto. The problem of Marian was cast scornfully aside while the three friends had their fling.

This was not in keeping with Paddy's character, so I changed my characterization of Paddy. I started using the drinking scene as a foundation and warping the other scenes to fit it. This was a mistake. Even though the drinking was a basic part of the character, the intoxication should have been regarded as a departure from the norm. Marian's domination had such a minor effect upon Paddy that the whole idea of the play was lost.

Since the director and I were at a loss, outside assistance was sought. I asked Frances Feist, Instructor in Speech and Drama, to help me with my characterization. Mrs. Feist, who later directed The Male Animal, suggested that I had not uncovered Paddy's true motivations for drinking. She advised me to stop listening to what Paddy was saying and find out what he was doing. Together, we determined that Paddy is not complaining to Marian, he's playing on her sympathy. He is like a little boy who is getting his own way by making his mother feel sorry for him. He is not reminiscing about the past when he is sitting in the chair by the fireplace. He is scheming up a plan to send Marian off to the convent.

This change of character completely altered the drinking situation. When Paddy is drinking with Oliver and Dick, he is doing something that Marian told him not to do. He thinks he is getting away with something. Thus, it was possible to utilize the comic possibilities in Paddy's attempt to conceal his intoxication. That there are comic possibilities in this is evidenced by the large number of cartoons that have been drawn concerning such situations.

The other characters in the play may think that Paddy is drinking to fortify his courage and to forget his troubles. The audience may think that Paddy's drinking is comic. To Paddy, however, the whole thing is a game. He is making a game of sneaking cigars, whiskey and his old cronies into the house. Oliver, Dick, Ducky and Pet are all his fellow conspirators. My mistake had been in not getting Paddy's perspective on the drinking situation. I knew what the playwright was after, what the audience wanted and what I was trying to do. I had not considered what Paddy was trying to do.

Once Paddy's motivations and attitudes were correctly established, the rest was comparatively easy. Now, Paddy sincerely enjoyed drinking. This made him a true tippler and a comic character.

I had Paddy down his drink in the third act with a little added bravado. He could drink openly in front of Marian without fear. The game was over and he had won.

G. Audience Reaction.

Paddy's enthusiasm and caution in the drinking scene were effective comedy. However, the newspaper critic's review criticized Paddy for jiggling up and down too much during this scene. Evidently, Paddy's excitement had appeared to be my nervousness. Possibly I had carried Paddy's enthusiasm too far.

The audience enjoyed Paddy's resemblance to a child and quickly caught the spirit of the game during the drinking scene. When Paddy was not aware that Marian was in the room, the audience almost shouted a warning to the blind, little tippler.

Chapter VI

TOMMY TURNER: "A COMIC DRUNK"

A. Foreword.

The comic drunk is a character whose overindulgence is intended to provoke the audience's laughter. As in all of the other classifications of intoxication, there are many possible variations within this general scope. Like the tragic drunk, the comic drunk's intoxication has gone beyond the "slight" stage. Broadway Jones in George M. Cohan's Broadway Jones, Martha in Eugene O'Neill's Anna Christie, and many of Leon Errol's characterisations in musical comedies and revues, are comic drunks.

B. Production Data.

1. Date: October, 1949
2. Play: The Male Animal
3. Author: James Thurber and Elliot Nugent
4. Type of play: Satirical comedy
5. Character: Tommy Turner
6. Type of character: University professor of English
7. Type of intoxication: A comic drunk
8. Director: Frances Feist

C. Description of Character.

Tommy Turner, in the James Thurber-Elliot Nugent comedy, The Male Animal, is an Associate Professor of English at Midwestern University. Besides being a successful teacher, he is also the author of several articles which have appeared in The Atlantic Monthly and Harper's magazines. Tommy is thirty-three years old, wears glasses and is rather more charming than handsome. He is shy, mild-mannered, absent-minded and scholarly. He clutters the living room with assorted books and papers and he absent-mindedly pockets the match boxes which his wife has placed around the room.

Tommy is not a precise, little English professor who lives in an ivory tower. His innate, almost naive, honesty causes him to be completely outspoken. He serves liquor in his home when he entertains. He has an intelligent sense of humor and is capable of kidding his own shortcomings. His students like him and he is well respected by the administration. Furthermore, he married the girl friend of an All-American football player.

The play is high, satirical comedy. Tommy is the play's principal character. It is one of the finest comedy roles in the modern theatre.

D. Synopsis of the Portion of the Plot Which Concerns the Character.

On the weekend of the Homecoming game, Tommy Turner's life becomes a turmoil. His problem is two-fold. First, he is in danger of losing his wife. Her old flame, an All-American halfback, returns for the game and sweeps her off her feet. His second difficulty arises when it is announced that Tommy intends to read to his class a letter written by Bartolomeo Vanzetti. Since Vanzetti was a Communist, Tommy's loyalty is questioned and his job is consequently threatened.

The letter is of interest to Tommy only as a piece of English literature but he resents the administration's attempt to interfere with his classes. He stubbornly decides to read the letter even if it costs him his job. He is less determined in his fight to keep his wife. Tommy reasons that he is an intelligent, civilized man and that civilized men no longer fight for their mates. On the afternoon of the Homecoming game, however, Tommy gets very drunk. In his intoxicated condition, his reasoning takes a new turn. He becomes a "male animal" who is fighting to ward off an invasion of his home. His attempts at fisticuffs are feeble, to say the least, but his efforts surprise his wife and awaken her respect.

Tommy reads the Vanzetti letter to one of the school's trustees. The trustee is not convinced but everyone else swings to Tommy's side. The students and the faculty announce that they will thwart any attempt to oust Tommy.

Tommy wins his wife back by his courageous stand.

E. Scenes Which Involve Drinking or Intoxication.

During the party scene, in the first act, Tommy develops an affection for the cocktail shaker. This is largely the result of his lack of affection for most of the guests. He becomes very outspoken and says more than diplomacy would permit. Unaccustomed to overindulgence, Tommy becomes sick and has to leave the room hurriedly. When he returns, his stomach is upset and his spirits are low. The others leave to attend a rally. Tommy remains home and mopes around the living room until the curtain falls.

His second scene of intoxication takes place during the second act. While everyone else is at the football game, Tommy and one of his students try to drown their respective sorrows. Tommy drunkenly lectures his student on the habits of various male animals. His information is not always accurate but his point is clear: all male animals fight for their mates. When the others return from the game, Tommy attempts to fight his rival, the All-American halfback. He slips, falls, hits his head on a bench and knocks himself out.

The third act takes place on Monday morning. Tommy did not awaken on Sunday and now he has a painful hangover. This is partially due to the slight concussion which he

received when he hit his head on the bench.

Intoxication is used in The Male Animal to develop the plot and to supply comedy. Of more importance is the character development that intoxication causes in Tommy. In the course of one weekend, Tommy develops a new personality. From a shy, mild-mannered professor, he changes into a confident, forceful, romantic figure. In many ways, Tommy "grows up." Alcohol plays an important part in his growth.

F. Developing and Interpreting the Scenes of Intoxication.

Tommy Turner is a comic drunk. He is not accustomed to alcohol and, consequently, drunkenness represents a great departure from his normal activities. One of the principal sources of humor in his intoxication is that it causes Tommy to do exactly what the audience wants him to do. The audience wants Tommy to stand up to the trustee and it wants him to fight for his wife. Alcohol gives him the courage to do both of these things.

Personal factors entered into the portrayal of Tommy, just as they had in previous cases. For several years, I had heard Professor Crafton discuss the extreme difficulty of the role. He had often mentioned that he would like to produce The Male Animal but that there was no one available who was capable of playing the part of Tommy. Needless to say, I undertook the role of Tommy with eagerness and a lack of confidence.

The first question was how Tommy would react to the liquor during the party scene. If he became too drunk, some of the effect of the intoxication scene in the second act would be lost. His intoxication in the first act had to be mild and yet it had to be pronounced enough to make his nausea believable. According to the script, Tommy drinks four Manhattans. He probably is not aware of the possible effect of four Manhattans. The drinks sneak up on him.

After following the usual course of going from one extreme to the other, it dawned on me that I was working too hard. The playwrights had already done most of the work. They had indicated Tommy's intoxication so thoroughly that it was not necessary for me to add anything. The cocktail shaker, which Tommy carries with him throughout the scene, is an effective symbol of his intoxication. As long as the audience can see that shaker, they are aware that Tommy is drinking. Each time Tommy takes a drink, that fact is pointed up by the dialogue. His changes of mood and attitude are, in themselves, sufficient to indicate his intoxication. He first gets a little playful as his inhibitions are released. He sings a parody on a popular song which pokes fun at the football team. Shortly after this, he becomes loud and interrupts conversations. Then, he becomes intense in his seriousness and finally, gets sick. To portray this scene of intoxication, I had only to capture the

mood and Tommy's changes of attitude. The playwrights' careful and thorough writing had lessened the actor's task considerably. Tommy returns from his quick exit thoroughly subdued. A lack of subtlety in portraying Tommy's sudden illness probably removed all necessity of indicating, upon his return, that he had been sick. However, as Tommy descended the stairs, I had him tucking his tie back in his vest and replacing his glasses. During the remainder of the act, he moved very slowly. He was still ill and in a depressed state of mind. Once again, the directions of the playwrights and the director made this an easy task. I did not have to invent any business or gestures to indicate the intoxication. This was all done for me.

The scene of intoxication in the second act is more complicated. Tommy is roaring drunk. I did everything that I could to make him appear so. His speech was inarticulate, his coordination was bad and he had trouble maintaining his balance. The director, Mrs. Feist, stepped in at this point to offer some badly needed direction. She explained that Tommy would be doing his utmost to maintain his dignity. He is reasoning out a problem which is of great importance to him. He is attempting to explain to the student why he is not fighting for his wife. Confused by the alcohol, he soon is explaining why he should fight for his wife. Mrs. Feist pointed out that I had been playing the scene as if Tommy and the student were old buddies.

She suggested that I regard Tommy as an intoxicated professor who is lecturing to a class of one pupil.

With this viewpoint in mind, I played Tommy with more reserve. He struggled to maintain his dignity. He sat up straighter than he normally would. His gestures were more studied and his movements were purposely slow and stiff. He spoke very slowly and effortfully in an attempt to overcome the haaard of drunken inarticulation. The effect was an improvement but atill unsatisfactory.

I needed something more to show that Tommy was lecturing rather than talking to a friend. The director suggested having Tommy use the chair pillows as demonstration devices. We had Tommy throw them on the floor and pretend that they were sea lions. In this way, Tommy could direct the student's attention to the pillows and appear to be lecturing about them.

At least one gesture was needed that would connect Tommy with the classroom. I observed several members of the university's faculty in hopes of finding a mannerism which would typify a lecturing professor. Some mannerisms which I noted were: fiddling with a pocket watch, flipping a piece of chalk, tugging on an ear lobe and toying with spectacles. Since Tommy wore glasses, the latter was selected. The spectacles were overworked until I finally decided to use them at only one point. Tommy concludes his ramblings by asking the student if there are any more

questions. As I said this line, I removed my glasses and cleaned the lenses with my tie. This one mannerism proved to be the most important factor in establishing Tommy's dialogue as a lecture.

Tommy and the student rearrange the furniture so that Tommy and his rival will have room for their fight. An old, but effective, gag was used during the furniture moving sequence. Tommy turns to say something to the student and discovers that the student has moved. Tommy searches until he finds the student and then repeats the line of dialogue. This gag was used twice during the scene. Most of its effectiveness was lost the second time.

All of Tommy's lecture is delivered while he is seated. When his rival enters the room, Tommy stands and starts chasing him around the room. In his eagerness to do battle, Tommy loses some of his dignity. He weaves and staggers awkwardly. His gestures are uncoordinated. The script, itself, omits certain consonants from many of the words in Tommy's dialogue. It was difficult to avoid overacting this scene. Tommy, himself, is dramatically overplaying the role of a "jealous husband." It would be easy for this overacting to seem to belong to the actor instead of to Tommy. It is necessary to superimpose the intoxication over Tommy's jealousy, anger and intenseness.

The "hangover scene" in the third act was difficult to portray. Tommy's intoxication is supposed to effect a

change in his personality. He must show, in the third act, that the experience has caused him to mature. The dialogue reveals this to some extent but Tommy must show by his actions that his personality has changed. The change was effected by playing Tommy as a more decisive character in the third act. His gestures were more definite and less erratic. His facial expression was more solemn. He was more aggressive and determined. Only occasionally did he lapse back into the absent-minded, whimsical portrayal. The times that he did were used as contrast to indicate his growth.

Several outside factors provided stumbling blocks to the portrayal of Tommy. The cocktail shaker which was provided as a prop was made of glass. The top did not fit properly, allowing the contents to spill over the side. This made the shaker slippery and extremely difficult to carry.

The metal cocktail glasses were covered with soap to prevent their reflecting the light. It was virtually impossible for Tommy to seem to be enjoying the drinks that he took from these glasses. The facial expressions that unavoidably accompanied the taste of soap were in keeping with Tommy's character at the start of the scene. However, he would not continue to make a face every time he took a drink.

The ice pack, which Tommy wore on his head in the third act, did not have a chin strap. If the muslin were tied

tightly enough to secure the ice pack, I could barely open my mouth to speak. If the muslin were loosened, I was in constant danger of losing the pack. It became necessary to play most of the scene with one hand above my head, holding the ice pack.

The rehearsal schedule accidentally provided an obstacle. Because of time limitations, we usually rehearsed the first half of the play on one night and the second half on the following night. The logical point of division was between the first and second scenes of the second act. The second scene was Tommy's drunk scene with the student. Thus, the rehearsal schedule necessitated starting each rehearsal of the scene of intoxication "cold." It is much easier to play Tommy's drunkenness after playing the previous scenes. The first half of the play builds up skillfully to the scene of intoxication. Without this build-up, Tommy was just "a drunk." This was one of the reasons why Tommy's intoxication was not in keeping with his character throughout most of the rehearsals.

Having observed my work in previous shows, Mrs. Feist, the director, was aware that I usually have to suffer through the first few weeks of rehearsal before settling on a characterization. Interpreting my lack of confidence as the usual "suffering," she was not particularly perturbed by it. Instead of encouraging me, she sympathized with me, repeating that she realized how difficult the part

was for an actor. Her directions were excellent and improvements were forthcoming from every discussion that we had. Still the scene was not satisfactory; something was missing. The scene was not funny; it was dead.

During the last week of rehearsal, Mrs. Feist became ill and Professor Crafton had to take over the directorial reins. He immediately sensed my problem and diagnosed the trouble. I was working too hard and not enjoying myself. His first words were to tell me what a good job he thought I was doing. He especially remarked about the scene of intoxication. True or not, his remarks provided the needed spark. The scene improved. His flattery continued and the scene continued to improve. He offered very few suggestions or criticisms. He concentrated on giving me encouragement. The scene eventually became the comic highlight of Tommy's characterization.

G. Audience Reaction.

In general, and throughout the play, the audience's reaction to Tommy was one of understanding and sympathy. It is of interest to analyze whether this sympathy was created and maintained through Tommy's likeable character, his naivete and absent-mindedness, or whether his mild intoxication in act one, and his comic drunken condition in act two were responsible.

It is obvious that the playwrights established a bond of sympathy between Tommy and the audience, without the aid of liquor; but a review of the action of the play gives evidence that this sympathy could not have been maintained throughout the three acts had not the character been supplied with certain qualities of self-expression and bravado. Whereas Tommy began as an understandable, sympathetic person, he did not possess the attributes of a hero.

During the mild cocktail drinking scene in act one, his tongue was loosed and the audience began to warm to him; they seemed to sense that through alcohol it might be possible for him to rise to a self-assertive state wherein he could be a semi-comic hero. During the second act drunk scene wherein, almost completely under the influence of liquor, he expresses himself on the subject of "the male animal," and aided by liquor he is willing and anxious to engage in physical combat, the audience not only accepted him and sympathized with him, but seemed to love him. In playing this scene, the response of the audience's thoughts and feelings came across the footlights to me. There was no mistaking this one response. Drinking and drunkenness forged a link in the chain of sympathetic understanding which had been absent before.

This brings up an interesting point. The audience was a Kansas audience. Kansas had been a prohibition state until two months before. There were many adults in the aud-

ience who had, undoubtedly, voted for prohibition. There were also many students who had come from families in which prohibition had been taught. Yet this audience seemed to be a homogeneous unit in accepting the device of inebriation for comedy. It applauded Tommy's drunkenness because the intoxication provided those added qualities which gave him the stature of a hero.

During the four night run of the play, the first night's audience responded much as has been described above. On the second night, I, the actor, reasoning illogically (or perhaps more truly reacting without reason), made Tommy more drunk. I overplayed. On this night the response was not forthcoming. The spectators did not believe and would not accept the Tommy I was wrongly trying to give them. Sympathy was lost rather than gained.

This experience suggests another interesting point. Intoxication in itself may not be funny; it may not increase sympathy; it may turn against the actor. Although an audience, even a Kansas audience, has grown lenient in its acceptance of drinking, there are still bounds beyond which it will not go in its response. There must still be taste, there must still be the golden mean; the degree and type of intoxication (if it concerns a character whom the audience has accepted as believable) must not go beyond the limits which the audience will accept as natural for that character.

Chapter VII

CONCLUSIONS

These five roles have been experiments in the portrayal of intoxicated characters on the stage. It was mentioned in the introduction to this thesis that as the actor experiments by the trial and error method, he should note his mistakes and attempt to draw conclusions which will serve him in future roles. This final chapter will attempt to collect, assemble and correlate the conclusions which were drawn as a result of the experience in the five roles of intoxication.

It would be contrary to the idea of this thesis to suggest that any of the following conclusions should be regarded as rules or maxims for the portrayal of intoxicated characters. If there is no such thing as "a drunk," then there cannot be "a formula" for the portrayal of drunkenness. Therefore, the following remarks should be regarded as statements of what proved successful or unsuccessful in the portrayal of five particular characters.

A. Intoxication should not be regarded as a unit in itself. It is the outgrowth of the character's attitude, his environment, his motivations for drinking, his mood, his personality, his personal habits and the situation in which

he is placed. Obviously, it is necessary to know the character before it is possible to know how he will behave while intoxicated. The actor's first step in the development and interpretation of a role of intoxication is to become acquainted with the character.

B. If possible, the actor should try to forget, for the time being, that he is dealing with a character in a play. Ignoring the acting possibilities and the intent of the playwright, the actor should try to think of the character as an individual. Who is this individual? What is he like, what are his personal habits? Where does he live, what is his environment? When did he live? Is he contemporary? How does he think and talk, and what are his attitudes? Some of this information can be discovered simply by reading the play. A mere examination of the dialogue, however, is not always sufficient. An attempt should be made to discover what the individual is doing, not just what he is saying. Just as you cannot completely judge a person's true thoughts by listening to his conversation, so you cannot completely understand a character in a play by studying his dialogue. What he is saying is not as important as why he is saying it. Such an understanding of the character will later help the actor know how that person might behave while intoxicated.

C. When the actor is thoroughly familiar with the character as an individual, he is ready to observe the situation and the plot of the play. What happens to the character during the course of the play? Why does it happen? How does he react to it? Does the individual change in any way because of what occurs? Would such a change cause him to behave differently while intoxicated?

D. Up to this point, the actor has not been concerned with the style of the play or the type of production. His only concern has been to acquaint himself fully with the character. Now, he is ready to analyze the outside factors which will affect the interpretation of the role. He must consider the intent of the playwright, that is, what the playwright had in mind when he wrote the play. The style of the play and the type of production will dictate how the character should be presented in the portrayal. The actor should try to determine how his character fits into the overall pattern. He should try to visualise the play as a whole.

E. Not until he has done all of this, should the actor consider the scenes of intoxication. It would be a grave mistake to begin with the scene of intoxication, even if that is the most important or crucial scene in the play. The intoxication should be regarded as a variation from

the norm, what the character is doing while under the influence of alcohol that differs from his normal actions. Warping the characterization in other scenes to fit an interpretation of a drinking scene will usually result in a misinterpretation of the entire role.

F. If the actor has been thorough in his investigation of the character, he will know why that character is drinking and how that character will behave while intoxicated. Even so, the actor should be certain that he understands the character's perspective on the drinking situation. The drinking may signify one thing to the audience and another thing to the other characters in the play. Of primary importance to the actor is what the drinking signifies to the character who is doing it. Why is he drinking or why does he think he is drinking? Does he know or think that he is drunk? Does he care?

G. It is easy to confuse the character's perspective with the playwright's objective. Both the character and the intoxication serve a purpose in the playwright's complete scheme. It is important for the actor to understand why the playwright has the character drink or become intoxicated. Intoxication is such an obvious and familiar state that it could dominate more important elements of the play if its function in the play is not fully understood. It is

obvious from this study that intoxication is used by dramatists for many purposes. Among the many things for which the playwright may use the intoxication are:

a. Comedy of character, dialogue and situation, as used in J. M. Synge's The Tinker's Wedding.

b. Development of tragic situation or circumstance, as used in Sean O'Casey's Juno and the Paycock.

c. Creation, heightening and changing of mood, as used in Don Totheroh's Moor Born.

d. Plot development, as used in William Vaugn Moody's The Great Divide.

e. Characterization or character identification, as used in Tennessee Williams' A Streetcar Named Desire.

f. Developments or changes within the character's personality, as used in James Thurber's and Elliot Nugent's The Male Animal.

g. Release of character's inhibitions, as used in Noel Coward's Fallen Angels.

h. Motivation of dialogue, as used in Maxwell Anderson's Joan of Lorraine.

i. Motivation of actions, as used in Shakespeare's Taming of the Shrew.

j. Symbolism, as used in William Saroyan's The Time of Your Life.

k. Heightening or building of the drama, as used in Sutton Vane's Outward Bound.

l. The principal subject or the central theme and idea of the play, as used in Don Marquis' The Old Soak.

H. Playwrights seldom use intoxication as the principal idea of a play. Usually, it is a minor element which has been worked into the play, sometimes not too skillfully. It is often expedient for the playwright to involve alcohol as a motivating force for developments, complications and occurrences. The actor should be aware of the playwright's motives but he should not allow himself to become so concerned with such details that he loses the all-important perspective of the character.

I. Just as the actor may have to adjust his characterization so that it fits into the play, he may also have to adjust it so that it is compatible with the director's interpretation. An actor, undertaking any characterization with all its complexities, is never able to judge what he is actually doing; since he is trying to be the character, he is never sure of how he is succeeding. The matter of intoxication complicates this problem. Although the drinking or intoxicated character is common in plays, intoxication is something which must be handled very carefully,

more carefully, for example, than the characterization involving age or the expression of the emotion of fear. As has been explained in this thesis, intoxication can easily be overdone, or become offensive, or give a wrong interpretation, or shift the audience's viewpoint to a secondary matter. Even though I was concerned with the re-writing of the intoxicated character in Bury the Dead, I was not able to transfer that character to the stage by myself, but had to have the objective judgment of the director. By discussing the character and the play with the director while the play is in its early rehearsals, the actor may eliminate the necessity for a greater change later. A slight change of character could mean a great change in the type of intoxication.

J. When, in rehearsal, the actor commences the actual portrayal of intoxication, he may run into trouble. What feels right to the actor may not suggest intoxication to the audience. The indefinite gestures of an intoxicated person are not always effective indicators of drunkenness when used on the stage. Instead, they often suggest that the actor is indecisive and unsure of himself. Without going to the other extreme and being completely mechanical, the actor can, at least, consider the physical reactions which seem to accompany, and consequently suggest or connote, intoxication:

a. Loss or partial loss of coordination

b. Loss of balance

c. Articulatory difficulty in speech

d. Release of inhibitions

e. Stimulation and/or depression of spirit

f. Unfocusing of eyes and subsequent difficulties of sight

g. Loss of dignity and/or possible over attempt to maintain dignity

h. Increase of intensity of emotion

i. Unusual or confused thought patterns

j. Nausea or drowsiness as possible aftereffects of overindulgence

k. Unkempt appearance as suggested by a disarrangement of hair and clothing or by an unshaven beard

Naturally, any and/or all of these reactions would be in proportion to the extent of intoxication. Also, an experienced drinker, such as the tippler or the old soak, would be capable of drinking without showing the same effects that an inexperienced drinker might evince after an equal number of drinks. It cannot be assumed that all drinkers will react identically to any given number of drinks. However, by this time in the actor's development of the character, he should know his character sufficiently to be able to judge which of the foregoing reactions should be included in that character's intoxication.

K. Personal elements or factors may enter into the interpretation. No two actors will interpret a role in the same way. The actor's physical characteristics, his mental and emotional depth and his capabilities will determine, to some extent, the individuality of his portrayal. These personal factors may also provide a stumbling block to the desired interpretation. The personal feelings of the character may intrude upon the character's attitude. For example, my tenseness made it difficult to portray Long's release of inhibitions and my lack of confidence made it difficult for me to show that Tommy Turner was gaining confidence. These personal factors may provide temporary setbacks but they are impossible to avoid unless a mechanical robot is portraying the role.

L. Certain other factors may cause the actor to try too hard, to exaggerate excessively and overplay. In such cases, the actor should remember that his audience is familiar with intoxication and may be able to supply more with their imaginations than he is capable of giving them. The subtle suggestion of a few indications of intoxication sometimes is more effective than leaving nothing to the imagination. In fact, the actor should be able to receive help from the audience. In the five experiments of this thesis, important information about the characterization was often acquired by observing the audiences' reaction to

the portrayal. Like the director, the audience provides another yardstick by which the actor may judge the aptness of his interpretation.

M. For the portrayal of comic intoxication, the actor should be cautious of either underplaying or overplaying the role. The response of laughter often encourages the actor to try harder. A lack of response might do the same or it might discourage or confuse the actor, causing him to withdraw and underplay the intoxication. Some intoxication scenes are hairline cases; if the intoxication is slightly over-or underplayed, the scene ceases to be funny.

N. It is easier to make a character's intoxication comic if he enjoys drinking than if he craves alcohol. Also, it is funnier to have the character drinking for pleasure than for so-called "psychological reasons." A depressed drinker is not as funny as one who is enjoying himself. If the drinker's problems are made to seem serious enough, the audience may be more concerned than amused. Perhaps it is true that the more the character appears to be enjoying his intoxication, the more the audience will enjoy it. Ordinarily, the writer of comedy will have provided an opportunity for such an interpretation. It is the actor's responsibility to utilize that opportunity.

O. Audiences enjoy watching the intoxication motivate the character to do what they want him to do. If the character has been an ineffectual individual and becomes decisive while intoxicated, the intoxication has been worthwhile from the standpoint of the character, the play and the audience.

P. There are comic possibilities in having a character attempt to conceal his intoxication or maintain his dignity. There is a certain added respect for the character who does not flaunt his intoxication in everyone's face.

Q. Audiences seem to enjoy the suspense and anticipation of watching the drinks "sneak up" on a character who does not realize that he is becoming intoxicated. This was true of the party scene in the first act of The Male Animal. The reaction to this is similar to that of any other instance in the theatre in which the audience knows what is going to happen and the character supposedly does not.

R. Pieces of comic business that cause the audience to recall similar happenings in their own or others' experience usually provoke laughter. Unexpected surprises, wherein the character does something that is in keeping with his personality and yet has not been anticipated by the audience, are also effective in comic intoxication.

A piece of comic business may lose its punch, however, if it is used repeatedly unless it is converted into a "running gag."

S. While it is generally true that the intoxication must stem from the character and be in keeping with his character, there are exceptions. In some cases, an unknown drunk could stagger across the stage without ever being identified and be hilariously funny. The long association of intoxication with the comic has almost welded them into Siamese twins. It is often possible to provoke an audience's laughter by merely mentioning the word "drunk." This complicates the task of portraying serious or tragic intoxication. A staggering walk may seem funny to the audience even though it was intended to indicate the pathetic condition of a tragic character.

T. The experience in these five roles would seem to indicate that it is easier to make an audience laugh with a comic drunk than it is to make them cry with a tragic drunk. Tragic intoxication is depressing. The need for comic relief could cause the audience to laugh at some indication of intoxication which would not be considered funny if it were used in a comedy. Since a laugh in the wrong place might spoil the mood of the scene, the actor who is portraying tragic intoxication should be very care-

ful about every movement that he makes.

U. First and foremost, the actor who is playing a tragic role of intoxication should attempt to explain to the audience the character's motivations for drinking. Unless the audience is in full agreement with the motivations, they are inclined to lose sympathy with the character. If that happens, they may become disgusted with the character and his intoxication.

V. Once the audience's sympathy is gained, it must be retained. Tragic intoxication can become wearing on the audience if it is prolonged. If the character is to be extremely intoxicated throughout a long period, the actor must create moments or interludes of respite in which the character's intoxication is not so obvious or depressing. One method of accomplishing this is to have the character attempt to conceal his intoxication while in the presence of certain other characters. As a word of caution, it should be remembered that an attempt to conceal intoxication can become comic. Another method of underplaying the intoxication would be to utilize the fatigue or drowsiness which sometimes accompanies intoxication.

W. If there is an arbitrary choice as to the tragic drunk's age, it would probably be advisable to portray the

character as an older man. The audience may lose sympathy with a young man who becomes tragically drunk. They would prefer to see the young man fight back instead of dodging the issue by becoming intoxicated. The wisdom that is accorded to age makes the audience believe that perhaps the older man has more justification for his drinking.

X. Another reason for choosing the older man might be that it would provide better possibilities for make-up. Make-up, properties and costumes can aid the actor in his portrayal of intoxication. Effective make-up and costumes can sometimes tell the audience something which the actor will not have to restate in his acting. For example, a flushed face and a bulbous nose can suggest that the character is a steady drinker. Properties can be used as a symbol of intoxication. For example, if a tippler has a whiskey bottle in his hand, the audience assumes that he is drinking whether he shows any signs of intoxication or not. All of this helps the actor indicate the character's drunkenness without making it necessary to exaggerate and emphasize the intoxication excessively. This is especially helpful in the portrayal of tragic intoxication. Properties also can be used in the actor's gestures and business, giving him something to do with his hands and making him seem more natural. Properties can provide unnecessary distractions, however, if they are poorly chosen or improperly used.

Y. In either tragedy or comedy, the intoxication should be consistent. The character cannot be drunk one minute and sober the next minute. If the playwright has written such a scene into the play, the intoxication should be made very slight so that it would be possible for the character to appear sober if he had to do so. If there is more than one scene of intoxication, the first scene should be started at a low pitch so that it will be possible to build the intoxication in later scenes. Unless the play is a farce or some other unrealistic drama, the intoxication will have to progress according to recognized standards. It will, also, have to be in keeping with the character. Even in a non-realistic production, it may be acceptable for a character to break suddenly into an interpretive dance but the audience would be confused if a character "suddenly" became drunk.

Z. A conclusion, drawn from the portrayal of these characters (and from an investigation into other plays in which intoxication is introduced) is that drinking and intoxication have assumed a prominent, if not an abnormal, place in modern drama; that they have proved useful to dramatists in many situations; and that audiences have grown to accept drinking and its various effects on human behavior as a usual, almost an expected element in plays, both comic and tragic.

This leads to another conclusion, -- this is more an hypothesis than conclusion since it is based upon such limited investigation, -- that on the stage, in the theatre, moral standards break down before a state of intoxication. That is, if an audience wants a thing to happen, it is willing and happy to accept intoxication as a way towards that thing happening. The audience may have been opposed to the drinking of liquor, but it wished, in the case of my characterization of Paddy Clancy, for me to gain my freedom to drink liquor. It may, theoretically, have been opposed to drunkenness, but it applauded my drunken condition in The Male Animal, since alcohol gave Tommy that which he needed for victory over himself and his antagonists.

AA. The conclusions listed under Z are based on the facts of experience. They raise other questions, such as: does the spectator in a theatre lose his sense of values, his perspective, and become a creature of immediate feelings, without reference to sober thought or home training and tradition? Or, is it true that this spectator is more free and honest, is more an individual unhampered by creeds and codes which have been imposed upon him, and so is expressing himself more truly and honestly. These are questions which I shall not attempt to answer. They carry us into fields of inquiry far from the subject matter of this

thesis. However, they still remain pertinent questions for the student of philosophy, sociology or morals.

No apology is offered for the absence, in this thesis, of any decisive formulas for the portrayal of intoxication. Acting is still a creative art and there can be few mathematical certainties in any art. The development, interpretation and portrayal of each intoxicated character is, and undoubtedly will continue to be, an experiment. It is hoped that, for the novice actor who has never undertaken such an experiment, this study may have provided a helpful discussion of a problem which he will probably encounter in the pursuit of his career: the portrayal of a role which involves drinking or intoxication.